

ARTICLE 12

We believe in the Lord's Supper and washing of the saints' feet.

1. The Lord's Supper

a. Several terms have been used to describe the Lord's Supper.

Scripture references:

Feast of the Passover—Exodus 12; 1 Corinthians 5:7

Lord's Supper—1 Corinthians 11:23-26

Holy Communion—1 Corinthians 10:16-17

Holy Eucharist—1 Corinthians 10:16; 11:24

- (1) **The Jews celebrated the “Feast of the Passover,” a meal commemorating their deliverance from Egypt.**
- (2) **An appropriate designation of the Holy Meal is the “Lord's Supper” because of who invites us to the Meal.**
- (3) **Another significant designation for the Lord's Supper is Holy Communion (*koinōnia*—fellowship).**
- (4) **The Lord's Supper is also referred to as the “Holy Eucharist.”**

b. Jesus Christ instituted the Lord's Supper during His last meal with His disciples before His Crucifixion.

Scripture references: Luke 22:19-20; Matthew 26:26-30; Mark 14:22-26; 1 Corinthians 11:23-26

c. The Lord's Supper is a holy ordinance that has deep significance in our relationship with Christ and in our relationships with each other.

Scripture references:

A remembrance—1 Corinthians 11:25

An expression of thanksgiving—1 Corinthians 10:16; 11:24

Communion—1 Corinthians 10:16; John 6:57-58

Proclamation of Christ's death and Second Coming—1 Corinthians 11:26

(1) The Lord's Supper is a remembrance of the Lord.

(2) Observance of the Lord's Supper is an expression of thankfulness to God.

(3) The Lord's Supper is communion.

Fellowship with Christ—

Fellowship with One Another—

(4) The Lord's Supper proclaims the death of Christ until He comes again.

A reminder of Christ's First and Second Coming—

Observance of Holy Communion until Christ's return—

d. Today Christians throughout the world continue to observe the Lord's Supper.

Scripture references:

An announcement of Christ's death—Matthew 26:26; 1 Corinthians 11:24-26

A sacred ordinance—Matthew 26:26-29; Mark 14:22-25; Luke 22:14-20; 1 Corinthians 11:23-26

For all believers—John 6:35; 1 Corinthians 11:27-32

- (1) **The importance of the Lord's Supper lies primarily in that it points to Christ's death through which He initiated the new covenant between God and humans.**
- (2) **The Lord's Supper is a special and sacred ordinance.**
- (3) **The Lord's Supper is for all believers.**
- (4) **There are a variety of ways churches may serve the Lord's Supper.**

General Holy Communion practices

The Bread—

The Wine—

Receiving Holy Communion—

Meaning of Holy Communion practices

Holy Communion practices in the Church of God

Days of observation

2. Feet Washing

- a. As with the Lord's Supper, there exists a close link between Christ's washing of the disciples' feet and His death.**

Scripture references: John 10:11, 15, 17-18; 13:1-17

(1) **By washing the feet of His disciples, Jesus vividly portrayed His death on the Cross.**

(2) **To enjoy a relationship with Jesus Christ, we must allow Him to cleanse our lives.**

- b. Feet washing is a holy ordinance that has deep significance in our relationship with Christ and in our relationships with each other.**

Scripture references:

Points to Jesus' cleansing power—John 13:8-10

Summons believers to humble service—John 13:13-17

(1) **Feet washing points to the cleansing power of the sacrificial death of our Lord.**

(2) **Feet washing summons believers to humble service to God and others.**

- c. Feet washing is a holy ordinance that reminds of the cleansing power of the Cross.**

Scripture references:

Historical roots—Genesis 18:4; 1 Samuel 25:41

Significance of Jesus' washing of His disciples' feet—John 13:1-17

(1) **Feet washing has historical roots in the practice of hospitality during biblical times.**

(2) **The washing of the disciples' feet by Jesus had deeper significance than did the common practice of washing feet as an act of hospitality.**

d. Today a number of Christians continue to observe feet washing.

Scripture references: John 13:1-17

(1) **All believers are eligible to participate in feet washing.**

(2) **Jesus intended for feet washing to be observed by the church.**

Feet washing practices in the Church of God

Days of observation

Discussion

The Lord's Supper

- 1) Name some terms used to describe the Lord's Supper and discuss the significance of each term.
- 2) What is the importance of the Lord's Supper today?
- 3) What has participation in the Lord's Supper meant to your life?

Feet Washing

- 4) Discuss two vital truths that feet washing demonstrates.
- 5) Have you ever participated in feet washing? If so, what did you learn in the experience?

Prayer

Most gracious God, we thank You for Your Son and His sacrifice at Calvary. We thank You for inviting us to the Holy Table of our Lord and to the service of the washing of the feet of fellow believers.

We pray that You will teach us reverence for holy things. Help us to grasp that Holy Communion and humble service in feet washing point us to the Cross and Christ's gifts of forgiveness and life.

Enable us to come to the Table and to the service of the towel with sincere faith and fervent devotion, so that we may receive nourishment from the bread of heaven and be cleansed by Christ's atoning death.

And grant, dear Lord, that by daily devoting ourselves to You, we may remember and live as people who are not our own, but people bought with a price, the precious blood of Christ. May we draw strength from our daily communion with You, loving, forgiving, and serving others as You have done for us.

Amen.

Resources for Additional Study

Barclay, William. *Lord's Supper*. Louisville, Ky.: Westminster John Knox Press, 2001.

Stoffer, Dale R., ed. *The Lord's Supper: Believers Church Perspectives*. Scottdale, Pa.: Herald Press, 1997.

Thomas, John Christopher. *Footwashing in John 13 and the Johannine Community*. Sheffield, England: Sheffield Press, 1991.